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ABSTRACT

Sharing research completed during a practicum project, this resource guide presents ideas, suggestions, and references to enhance children's and educators' repertoire of reading strategies. It lists 50 ways to encourage reading and writing connections at home; presents 10 reading strategies for unknown words; offers 17 suggestions for literacy programs for parents; lists addresses of 10 family literacy agencies and associations; and lists 17 sources of information on how parents, students, and teachers can work together. The guide then presents a review of research on aesthetic reading and language arts strategies. Contains 46 references at the end of the review of research and a total of 9 references at the ends of individual sections of the guide. (Author/RS)

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ED 432 743

Reading Resource Guide

by

Mary F. Ballinger

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This reading resource guide was developed as a means of sharing the research done during the practicum for an educational specialist degree from Nova Southeastern University. Please take advantage of the suggestions, ideas, and references in the enhancement of your repertoire of reading strategies. Permission is granted to copy these materials for classroom use.

Mary Ballinger

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50 Ways to Encourage the Reading and Writing Connection At Home

The following suggestions can serve as springboards to other enterprises for you and your child to explore.

1. Write a courtesy letter, such as an invitation or thank-you note.
2. Write a letter to a favorite author or illustrator. Addresses are available on-line and through most bookstores.
3. Write a pen pal letter. (Mail through the USPS or on-line.)
4. Retell a story, in written words and aloud.
5. Dramatize the story. Step into a character's shoes.
6. Read a book and watch the movie adaptation. Compare and contrast the two.
7. Read magazines with the child, and discuss the language and propaganda devices used in the advertisements.
8. Use the closed-captioned feature on the television for entertaining practice that is self-correcting. The dialogue will appear on the screen much like the subtitles in foreign films.
9. Keep a family journal or diary.
10. Read environmental print (signs, product labels, etc.).
11. Provide art materials for responses to books read.
12. Be a role model. Let your child see you read.
13. Give books and magazine subscriptions as gifts.
14. Visit the public library on a regular basis.
15. Leave lots of notes for the child. These can be placed in lunchbags, on mirrors or pillows, in a bookbag, etc.
16. Play board games that encourage playing with words or reading.
17. Encourage the child to read to you and to others.
18. Encourage the child to write down phone messages and compose shopping lists.
19. Make a photo album together. Have the child write captions.
20. Listen to books on tape at home and while traveling. Whenever possible, have the child follow along with a copy of the book.
21. Have the child record his or her own reading of a book on tape.
22. Keep a small chalkboard or memo board in the child's room or kitchen for morning messages. Leave chalk or a marker for responses.
23. When planning a trip, have the child chart the course on a map.
24. Keep a dictionary close at hand. Put an extra paperback copy in the car.
25. Share the newspaper.
26. Make connections between real life and the characters and themes in books.
27. Watch literacy-related programs, such as Reading Rainbow.
28. Encourage hobbies.
29. Exercise patience. Each child is unique. Fluency in reading takes time.
30. Provide materials for writing.

31. Set up an area in the home just for writing.
32. Set up an area in the home just for reading.
33. Sing songs. Write lyrics to familiar tunes.
34. Play a word game aloud while driving, waiting in the doctor's office, etc. This can be as simple as saying a rhyming word, and asking the child to respond (ex - chair, bear)
35. Collect menus from restaurants and travel brochures for use as reading materials.
36. Encourage the child to write for free materials from various organizations and agencies.
37. Have high expectations and convey them to the child.
38. Make greeting cards instead of buying them.
39. When cooking, have the child read the directions for the recipes out loud.
40. Have reading and writing be enjoyable. Model the purposes instead of telling.
41. Encourage and promote variety in the selection of reading materials.
42. Promote the child's interests. Help him or her become an "expert" on a subject through further research and exploration of a topic.
43. Have your child help you address envelopes.
44. Show your child how to write a check and fill in the information on a deposit slip.
45. Display your child's work in a special place (not just on the refrigerator). An inexpensive frame or bulletin board can be used over and over to showcase great writing.
46. When a phone number needs to be found, have your child find it in the phone directory.
47. Document the family's history. Have the child conduct an "interview" with a grandparent to gather and record information. Encourage the retelling of family stories.
48. Select programs for television viewing by having the child read and share the guide listings.
49. When you've bought a new appliance, VCR, etc., read through the instructions and operating manual with the child.
50. Sort, package, and label items in the "junk" drawer, from the garage, etc.

References

Cullinan, B.E., & Galda, L. (1998). Literature and the child (4th ed.). Orlando: Harcourt Brace.

Routman, R. (1994). Invitations: Changing as teachers and learners, K-12. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Tompkins, G.E. (1997). Literacy for the twenty-first century: A balanced approach. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Tompkins, G.E. (1998). Language arts: Content and teaching strategies (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Reading Strategies for Unknown Words

When the child comes to an unfamiliar word, these strategies may be used:

•Skip the word, read on to the end of the sentence or paragraph, or go back to the beginning of the sentence and try again.

• Read on, and reread inserting the beginning sound of the unknown word.

• Look for a small word or known chunk. Use finger to cover part of the word.

• Substitute a word that makes sense.

• Look for clues in the pictures whenever pictures are provided.

• Link to what is already known (prior knowledge).

• Predict and anticipate what could come next.

• Self-monitor. Ask "Does it sound/look right? Does it make sense?"

• Write unknown words down on Post-its or in a small notebook.

• Reread for fluency and understanding (meaning).

Reference

Routman, R. (1994). Invitations: Changing as teachers and learners, K-12. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Suggestions for Literacy Programs for Parents

These suggestions may be used as ideas for workshops for parents on back-to-school or open house nights or as a part of a grade-level presentation.

- How to assist children in developing phonemic awareness.
- How to do shared reading.
- How to read books to children.
- The role of computers (technology) in supporting literacy.
- How to help with and monitor homework even if the parents cannot do the homework themselves.
- Ways siblings can support and participate in home literacy programs.
- How to choose appropriate books for children based on their interests and needs.
- How to conference with the teacher.
- How to use the school media center.
- Ways parents can talk to their children about literacy papers brought home from school.
- How the school expects parents can help at home.
- Ways to focus children's attention to print.
- How to be a role model for reading and writing.
- Contents of a home literacy area.
- How to record language experience stories with children.
- Providing literacy learning opportunities through play.
- How to observe in a classroom.

Reference

Tompkins, G. (1997). Literacy for the twenty-first century: A balanced approach. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Family Literacy Agencies and Associations

Family literacy programs of today are built on the wealth model as opposed to the deficit model of the past. The wealth model stresses that all families have home literacy patterns, and programs should build on these patterns instead of imposing school-like activities on parents (Morrow et al., 1995). Today's programs are designed for minority parents, parents who are nonnative English speakers, and parents who are not fluent readers and writers. The following list represents family literacy agencies and associations dedicated to improving the literacy development of children and parents. The list may be used as a resource for obtaining information regarding grants, low-cost book distribution, conferences, and reading-related events.

The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy
1002 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20007

Children's Television Workshop
One Lincoln Plaza
New York, NY 10023

Even Start Program
Compensatory Education Programs
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Room 2043
Washington, DC 20202

Family English Literacy Programs
Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Room 5620
Washington, DC 20202

Head Start Bureau
PO Box 1182
Washington, DC 20013

National Center for Family Literacy
401 South 4th Avenue, Suite 610
Louisville, KY 40202

National PTA
700 N. Rush Street
Chicago, IL 60611

Reading is Fundamental, Inc.
5500 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20024

UNICEF
3 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

Clearinghouse on Adult Education
U.S. Department of Education
Division of Adult Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

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Morrow, L.M., Tracey, D.H., & Maxwell, C.M. (1995). A survey of family literacy in the United States. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Tompkins, G. (1997). Literacy for the twenty-first century: A balanced approach. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Sources of Information on How Parents, Students, and Teachers Can Work Together

Akroyd, S. (1995). Forming a parent reading-writing class: Connecting cultures, one pen at a time. The Reading Teacher, 48, 580-584.

Altwerger, B., & Flores, B. (1994). Theme cycles: Creating communities of learners. Primary Voices, K-6, 2, 2-6.

Atwell, N. (1987). In the middle: Writing, reading, and learning with adolescents. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Calkins, L.M. (1994). The art of teaching writing (Rev. ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Come, B., & Fredericks, A.D. (1995). Family literacy in urban schools: Meeting the needs of at-risk children. The Reading Teacher, 48, 566-570.

Edwards, P.A. (1995). Empowering low-income mothers and fathers to share books with young children. The Reading Teacher, 48, 558-564.

France, M.G., & Hager, J.M. (1993). Recruit, respect, respond: A model for working with low -income families and their preschoolers. The Reading Teacher, 46, 568-572.

Freeman, D.E., & Freeman, Y.S. (1993). Strategies for promoting the primary languages of all students. The Reading Teacher, 46, 552-558.

Graves, D.H. (1994). A fresh look at writing. Portmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Kameenui, E.J. (1993). Diverse learners and the tyranny of time: Don't fix the blame; fix the leaky roof. The Reading Teacher, 46, 376-383.

Morrow, L.M., Tracey, D.H., & Maxwell, C.M. (1995). A survey of family literacy in the United States. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Purcell-Gates, V., L'Allier, S., & Smith, D. (1995). Literacy as the Harts' and Larsons': Diversity among poor, inner-city families. The Reading Teacher, 48, 572-579.

Ruddell, R.B. (1995). Those influential literacy teachers: Meaning negotiators and motivation builders. The Reading Teacher, 48, 454-463.

Shanahan, T., Mulhern, M., & Rodriguez-Brown, F. (1995). Project FLAME: Lessons learned from a family literacy program for linguistic minority families. The Reading Teacher, 48, 586-593.

Shockley, B. (1993). Extending the literate community: Reading and writing with families. The New Advocate, 6, 11-24.

Tinajero, J.V., & Nagel, G. (1995). "I never knew I was needed until you called!": Promoting parent involvement in schools. The Reading Teacher, 48, 614-617.

Yokota, J. (1993). Issues in selecting multicultural children's literature. Language Arts, 70, 156-167.

Source

Tompkins, G. (1997). Literacy for the twenty-first century: A balanced approach. Upper Saddle River, N: Prentice-Hall.

Research in Aesthetic Reading and Language Arts Strategies

Aesthetic reading is the kind of reading most neglected in schools (Rosenblatt, 1982). When the emphasis on reading literature in the classroom is focused on finding answers to questions asked by the teacher, the literary experience for a student moves from listening aesthetically to listening for the purpose of gathering information (Perry, 1997). The cultivation of the genius in each child does not come from mastering information. Yet textbooks structure 75 to 90 percent of all learning that goes on in schools (Armstrong, 1998). Rosenblatt suggests that the notion a child must first cognitively understand a text before it can be responded to is a rationalization that must be rejected. Purely cognitive, or efferent, reading focuses on what is to be carried away at the end of a reading. Attention is given to ideas and meanings to be retained. The efferent stance is most often public. The aesthetic stance, however, is concerned with the private elements of a text. Students attend to the feelings and emotions derived from the reading. The text is reflected upon and experienced (Rosenblatt, 1991).

The reading of literature in the classroom is most often treated efferently. Though current basal series may be literature-based, the stories within the textbooks are read from an efferent stance. Children's literature author, Natalie Babbitt, has voiced her concerns over real stories being used in the same ways as the stories in readers of the past. Babbitt (1990) states, "It's as if the same recipe for stew were being followed in both cases, except that chicken has been substituted for Spam" (p. 697). Teachers often do not know the ways in which to use the basals in nontraditional ways (Routman, 1996). The results of the attention

to the efferent stance are seen in students who can identify characters' traits and the stories' elements, but are devoid of personal responses toward the reading itself (Spiegel, 1996). The aesthetic stance intertwines the individuals' life experiences and the story. Students draw on personal and cultural linguistic-experiential reservoirs in a transaction with the text (Ash, 1994). Aesthetic reading requires the students to construct meanings and interpretations. Learning is not linear and does not develop within the context of a single space or event (Gavelek and Raphael, 1996).

Social interactions support the growth of learning. Learning is a social phenomenon (Smith, 1989, 1992). Thirty years ago, behaviorists shaped the way teachers taught reading. B.F. Skinner (as cited in Tompkins, 1997) suggested that students learn to read by learning a series of sequenced, discrete skills. Since then, the constructivist, interactive, sociolinguistic, and reader response theories have influenced reading instruction.

The constructivist theories, influenced by Piaget (as cited in Tompkins, 1997), define children as active and motivated learners, relating new information to prior knowledge and experiences. The learners organize information in schemata. This view of learning presents the role of the teacher as one who assists students in organizing and constructing their own knowledge.

The interactive theories of Rumelhart and Stanovich (as cited in Tompkins, 1997) emphasize the interconnection between what is known and what is presented in the text. Students use word-identification skills and comprehension strategies. Fluent reading for the purpose of constructing meaning is stressed.

The sociolinguists, Heath and Vygotsky (as cited in Tompkins, 1997), view

social interaction as important to learning. They believe language helps to organize thought. Both theorists define the teachers' positions as those of assistants, providing scaffolding for children as needed. Vygotsky recommends instruction is to be planned based on each child's zone of proximinal development, that is, the range between actual development and the potential development.

Reader response theories, most often associated with Rosenblatt (1982), are concerned with the ways in which learners create meaning as they read. The theories suggest readers are responsible for making their own meaning which is created as a text is read. Children read for efferent or aesthetic purposes or for a combination of both. The main goal of instruction is for students to enjoy literature and become lifelong readers, though Calkins (1994) prefers to think of it as life-wide literacy, the love of reading and writing throughout the children's lives today.

The United States Department of Labor's Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills report (SCANS) (1992) told of the importance in the proficiencies of speaking, listening, and interacting to the workplace of the next century. However, discussion is often pushed aside in the average school day. Talking, alone, is not favorably viewed, yet teachers are in quandary when students are ill at ease when asked to publicly speak (Schmoker, 1996). Some schools have taken note, and adopted a change in their strategies. Programs, such as Mortimer Adler's Paideia Proposal, emphasize Socratic, or maieutic, teaching (Adler, 1984). The Paideia teachers of English focus on language and literature and evoke the aesthetic, intellectual, and emotional experiences from the students. The Paideia Program holds as a belief that literacy, the acquisition of knowledge, and the ability to think are interdependent.

When reading aesthetically is practiced, and responses are encouraged, students participate in conversations, learn questioning, opinion-giving, and argument. Growth, vision, and discovery are elements teachers aspire to develop in their students. Cognitive, affective, and behavioral growth does not occur solely within the self, but during the interaction with others. Vision emphasizes innovation, change, and awareness. Discovery contains tools of learning, such as reasoning and critical thinking. At its heart is imagination. The imagination is what drives students to think in fluid ways. It allows for the search for a manipulation of ideas in personal experiences and knowledge (Litterst and Eyo, 1993). The aesthetic stance allows discussion to come from the students, extracts the best from their thinking, and frees the teacher from being the focus of interactions.

As students take control of their learning, they are provided with the power of knowing they already possess valuable knowledge. Aesthetic reading reinforces this power by valuing the process of thinking. The exploration and journey through the reading of a book is regarded as highly as the outcome (Smagorinsky and O'Donnell-Allen, 1998a). Teaching reading aesthetically helps to develop students' images by placing them at the controls. It is through literacy that thinking flourishes (Smith, 1989).

Social interaction brings literature alive. Through democratic social interactions, interpretive communities arise. These communities share experiences during reader-response times which give support to students' ideas and provide the basis for trust and support (Spiegel, 1996). For students who have perceived themselves as failures in reading, reader-response reinforces the notion that they can create a story from a text (Ash, 1994). The sharing of literature helps

communities build common ground and develops intertextuality, the kind of construction and reconstruction of meaning that takes place between readers and writers (Cairney, 1990, 1992). As students read, they internalize structures and conventions of literary forms (Atwell, 1987). Their writings are often reflections of the texts they have read. In a study with African Caribbean adolescent girls, Henry (1998) found students engaged in self-expression through response journals and discussions. The students exemplified the notion that how individuals relate to a text is influenced by their prior experiences and social world. Lensmire (as cited in Henry) explains stories as representations of a privileged version of how the world should be and how we would like the world to be. In the retelling of stories, cultural narratives are drawn upon, and these narratives are twisted in ways that express our idiosyncratic worlds.

Creating an environment which fosters risk taking is crucial to the development of higher psychological processes (Gavelek and Raphael, 1996). Fear in the classroom thwarts learning. Parker (as cited in Litterst and Eyo, 1993) suggests that performers do not want to be seen as weak, stupid, or clumsy. The classroom environment and the subcultures existing within influence the dynamics of interactions. Engagement is affected by prior experiences and those in the classroom setting (Smagorinsky and O'Donnell-Allen, 1998a). Henry (1998) suggests being aware of not only cultural differences in the classroom environment and the literature, but also the gender differences. Both culture and gender influence the degree to which students may participate in responses.

Transactions which involve responding affectively and aesthetically, as well as summarizing, predicting, visualizing, making associations, problem solving, and

monitoring, are intended to produce successful readers who independently engage in these processes. This is consistent with Vygotsky's theory of social learning (Brown, El-Dinary, Pressley, and Coy-Ogan, 1995). Schuder (1993) and the staff in a large public school system made use of transactional strategies instruction with at-risk students. The strategies-based program, Students Achieving Independent Learning (SAIL), combined direct explanation, explicit instruction, reader response, and teacher-student-text interactions. Emphasis was place on ensuring the success of the students by starting at their proficiency levels. The strategies included wait time, non-evaluative judgments about the content of responses, elaboration on responses, and repetition of teacher-modeled responses if the students were unable to respond on their own. All students responded, none could fail, and any response was acceptable because it is was a starting point. The researchers combined the strategies within an integrated, meaning-based reading and language arts curriculum and found the students participated in literate discussions beyond expectations. As with the Paideia Program (Adler, 1984), the researchers assumed no student deficits, only that the students had the capacity to learn. Schuder (1993) found a devastating situation during the earlier implementations of the program. Teachers believed the program was appropriate for the gifted and talented students, but required too many skills for the low achievers.

Further studies with the SAIL program suggest that this type of instruction reflects the processes to promote memory and comprehension, as well as aesthetic appreciation (Pressley, El-Dinary, Gaskins, Schuder, Almasi, and Brown, 1992). Pressley et al. describe SAIL as constructivist in nature, but not relying upon rote

memorization. Researchers in the past relied upon quantified measures of memory which were based on the assumption that a text has a particular, objective meaning. The interpretive strategies were not given focus, and attention was diverted to low-level questions or the abstraction of main ideas. These ideas are in opposition to more contemporary theorists, such as Rosenblatt (1978,1995).

In transactional strategies instruction, many of the concepts are similar to those found in whole language practices. Teachers make decisions about instruction based on students' needs, and make adjustments along the way (Bergman, 1992). Basals or tradebooks can be used, and ample time is given for reading for pleasure. Regular writing is used as a means to respond to reading. The teachers and students conference to ascertain the students' needs and to provide any additional instruction. The children are made aware of how their comprehension is affected by the story structure and make use of metacognition. Grouping is varied, and may consist of whole-class or small groups or pairings of students. The teachers are enthusiastic, and the children feel safe in taking risks (Pressley, El-Dinary, Gaskins, Schuder, Bergman, Almasi, and Brown, 1992). El-Dinary and Schuder (1993) do not see transactional stategies instruction as a quick fix, but one that takes place over time, with teachers receiving modeling, coaching, and problem-solving, just like the students.

The strategy of repeated reading (RR), which can be included within the transactional strategies approach, has been found to be equal to or better than more complicated strategies such as summarization, notetaking, or outlining when students are requested to recall information. For high and low ability students, RR increases factual retention and faster reprocessing of the text. The initial reading of

unfamiliar or technical material usually requires an efferent stance, or more rote learning. Rereadings help students to recall structural information and terms and improve problem solving (Dowhower, 1989). Repeated oral readings encourage deeper thinking about the text, help the student's story comprehension, and result in more talk.

Chomsky, et al. (as cited in Dowhower, 1989) tells us that rereading the same passage increases the reading rate (number of words per minute) and accuracy (number of words read correctly). Comprehension gains on a practiced text carry over to a new unpracticed text. Dowhower found that after students read a series of five practice stories written at the second-grade level, students had a comprehension increase of 66% to 88% on pretest and posttest unfamiliar passages.

Fluent reading can be supported in the classroom by other strategies as well. The modeling of fluent reading provides students with representations of good reading. Less proficient readers are often assigned to classes with other disfluent readers and are least likely to see positive models. Teachers, or other fluent readers, can model reading daily (Rief and Barbieri, 1995). Tape recorded passages provide models of fluent reading and serve as support for children as they read along. Weiss (as cited in Rasinski,1989) suggested giving attention to phrase boundaries, such as in poems, by focusing on chunks of words and marking them with a penciled slash.

As children read and are read to, they become familiar with authors' styles and the rhythm of language. Siemens (1996) read poetry to students and engaged them in frequent writing. Students discovered patterns without being told the qualities of

poetry. Siemens would quick write on the overhead, modeling writing for the students before having them begin. During mini-lessons, the researcher gradually included direct instruction in the elements of poetry. The students, ages six to eight, began the year barely being able to write their names and identify their letters. Through guided imagery and attention to viewing everyday objects and occurrences aesthetically, the students progressed in their achievement.

Hammond (1993), in research with third-grade students, made use of a strategy called the internal screen. This screen, a perceptual base, is the place inside the head from which writing emerges. Hammond explained that writers talk about the fives senses, the only routes for getting information into the body. The sensory doors are to be open for the reader to understand the images from the writer's screen. The point of the writing lies in the reader discovering the images, and sharing the same moment or idea. Hammond believes students can write better if teachers show them how to get inside themselves and encourage them to pay attention to their own exact moments. Writing can help to process their experiences. Calkins (1994) discussed the concern for rightness in second and third graders. Calkins suggested this is due to the children becoming more able to distance themselves from their work, and see it through the eyes of others. The concern for rightness often inhibits students' writing and use of figurative language. Their writing is typically limited to trite subjects of someone else's invention. Calkins advised teachers to be aware of the children's focus on procedures, especially when attempting to conduct flexible, intuitive strategies.

The enhancement of vocabulary and comprehension can be achieved through the use of close-captioned television and video (Koskinen, Wilson, Gambrell, and

Neuman, 1993). Captions are similar to the subtitles found in foreign films. Teachers can use close-captioned technology to develop literacy skills. The captioned text, which appears across the bottom of the screen, helps students to engage in guided reading activities. Though captions were originally intended for hearing-impaired and deaf viewers, teachers have discovered the audio and video context is helpful in assisting students in understanding unknown words in print and in vocabulary development. Neuman and Koskinen (as cited in Koskinen et al.) found that bilingual students who viewed close-captioned programming performed better on word meaning, content learning, and word identification assessments than students who viewed the same programs without the captions. Captioned video may also be purposeful in developing character analysis, prediction, and sequencing. Students can read along with the displayed captions and increase their fluency. Since all new televisions sold in the United States since 1993 have built-in closed-captioned capability, many of the students can also take advantage of this feature at home.

Prior knowledge is a critical component of reading comprehension (Spires and Donley, 1998). In a study with high-school students, Donley and Spires conducted research using a prior knowledge activation (PKA) strategy. The students were encouraged to make spontaneous connections between their personal knowledge and informational texts. The researchers believed the informational, or expository, text requires no less personal engagement than narrative texts aesthetically read. In essence, Spires and Donley believed the reader can bring in a full continuum of responses when reading an informational text. This is in keeping with Rosenblatt's (1978, 1995) view that the reader may approach a reading either efferently or

aesthetically, but will, invariably, make use of both stances. Many (as cited in Spires and Donley) found when comparing efferent and aesthetic responses to literature, the aesthetic responses included higher levels of understanding of the literature. Students made more frequent use of abstract generalizations, analogies, and inferences, and were more varied and creative in their answers when given permission to use their prior knowledge. Overall, the students thought at a higher level about the text. The students' attitudes were also more positive. This was attributed to the idea that personal knowledge is inherently more motivating than simply retrieving main ideas from an informational text. Schiefele (as cited in Spires and Donley) suggested this as significant because of the positive role intrinsic interest plays in cognitive engagement with learning.

Though teachers, especially those in the elementary schools, may have flexibility within their reading programs, there exists the reality of completing materials, such as end-of-the unit tests. In an effort to reduce the amount of time spent on reading skills within the context of the basal program, Taylor, Frye, and Gaetz (1990) conducted research to investigate the effects of pretesting students on the skills thereby reducing the amount of time spent in their teaching. Even within current literature-based texts, skills are present. The researchers found that when students were engaged in the instruction of skills they already knew, time was taken away from activities, such as the reading of actual books. Taylor et al. discovered that primary through intermediate students, in three different studies, could safely skip 70-90% of the basal reader skills based on the scores from the pretests. This study aimed at reducing the amount of time on indirect skills, not direct instruction. Word-level literacy strategies, in context, are encouraged (Hiebert, 1991).

Morrow (1992) identified classroom characteristics that nurture aesthetic, voluntary reading. During investigations of classrooms where students were frequently engaged in reading by choice, it was found that, characteristically, teachers allotted time and opportunities to self-select books, integrated voluntary reading programs with instruction, had attractive and accessible library areas within the room, and provided literature-related activities. Bissett (as cited by Fractor et al., 1993) found students read 50% more books in classrooms with literature collections. Data collected from 183 classrooms by Fractor et al. showed that as the grades progressed, from K-5, the percentage of classrooms with libraries decreased. Of the classrooms observed, only 10 out of 183 (4.8%) were rated as having good or excellent libraries.

Morrow (1992), in a study of second-grade classes in a literature-based program, found the implementation of regularly scheduled literacy activities and the creation of literacy centers with time for pleasure reading and writing led to an increase in children's literacy performance on several measures. The children, from diverse backgrounds, succeeded in spite of research which is concerned with the lack of direct instruction found in most literature-based programs (Delpit, 1991; Strickland, 1994). Morrow found that when students worked in groups and the teacher held high expectations, modeled, facilitated, and participated in literature activities, there was success. The program made use of literature from cultural backgrounds which made up the target group. This may have made the children more comfortable and receptive to the genres. Other researchers have stressed the importance of including diverse texts in their classroom selections with respect to the learners. Sensitivity and attention to the depictions of characters within the

texts as well as the approach are necessary (Athanases, 1998; Rasinski and Padak, 1990).

The results of this research echo the importance of classroom libraries. Applebee, Langer, and Mullis (as cited in Fractor et al.,1993) suggested that well-designed libraries promote interaction among children with books. The children develop more positive attitudes toward reading, spend more time engaged in reading, and have higher levels of reading achievement. The role of choice in student engagement was studied by Schraw, Flowerday, and Reisetter (1998). In their research with college students, it was found that when students were allowed to self-select reading, the greater perceived autonomy resulted in higher levels of enjoyment and intrinsic motivation. Opportunities for developing self-management and self-regulatory strategies are a part of learning responsibility (Kohn, 1993).

Learners require choices to make connections and develop their own courses for learning (Berghoff and Egawa, 1991). Schraw et al. believe choice may reduce anxiety. Reader response theory suggests that choice promotes aesthetic reading, characterized by a greater sense of pleasure in reading and empathy for the characters. Choice may increase short-term interest in a topic, as well as deeper cognitive processing.

The reading of books aloud offers the opportunities to include strategy instruction in a meaningful context. Daily read aloud sessions stimulate language development, a sense of story structure, and metacognitive awareness. Reading alone may not be sufficient for maximum literacy growth, but the discussion and responses which surround the activity may be the key (Morrow, 1992). Students read and respond aesthetically to books in a variety of ways. Rowe (1998) found

that dramatic play, experiencing books in affective and kinesthetic ways, was an important part of young children's literacy interactions. Wolf (1998) studied remedial readers as they moved from a round robin reading situation to the dramatic forum of a classroom theatre to interpret literary texts. These students had positive results in decoding and comprehending through strategies that included voice, art, and personal experiences. Wynn (1994) offered strategies to teach elements of stories by setting the elements to the tunes of familiar songs. Similarly, stories could be retold using this method. Smagorinsky and O'Donnell-Allen (1998b) studied high school seniors and their process of collaborative multimedia composing as a means of interpreting a text. They found that reading and writing are influenced by prior situated processes and continue to influence future representations. Throughout the reading, mediation is taking place, and their perceptions are influenced by social contexts as well as the written word. Stubley (1995) connected the relation of the musical performance to literary reading. The researcher contends the performer adopts different stances, efferent or aesthetic, in the reading, practicing, and performance of works. The musical performance is the discovering and shaping of musical meaning for others, and is the experience required to bring the individual, musical self to its fullest potential.

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